

# Pacific Crossings

The official newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group

Vol. 6, No. 5

Andersen Air Force Base, Guam • Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii

May 2007

## Briefs

### New CES Commander



The 624th Regional Support Group would like to welcome Lt. Col. Richard Parkinson, the incoming 624th

Civil Engineering Squadron Commander, and his family to the unit.

### May Month Celebrations

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is celebrated in May to commemorate the contributions of people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent in the United States. May is also Military Appreciation month. For more information about Military Appreciation month, visit [www.nmam.org](http://www.nmam.org).

### Get an Education, with Benefits

Do you have an Associates, Bachelor's, or Master's Degree? Do you have a Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) Associates Degree? Would you like to know how to get your courses paid for your college enrollment? Get to know the benefits that are available from the Montgomery GI Bill for Selected Reserve, the Reserve Education Assistance Program. For more information, visit the Education Office in Hanger 7 or call Master Sgt. Sanz at 449-3397.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

**Master Sgt. Craig Okazaki, 48th Aerial Port Squadron, cleans up after being released from Mission Oriented Protective Postures, or MOPP, Level 4, which involves wearing many layers of protective gear. 624th Regional Support Group members practiced responding to chemical and biological agent attacks at their Patriot Force exercise, held at Hickam Air Force Base April 7 and 8.**

## Patriots Train in Force

**By Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap**  
624th Regional Support Group  
Public Affairs

At least Senior Airmen Jahnna-Lynn Palpallatoc and Charise Ponce didn't have to worry about sunburn. Like many of their fellow 624th Regional Support Group members, their skin was bathed in charcoal black before breaking down camp under the hot Hawaiian sun.

Patriot Force, the group's readiness exercise that concluded at the end of the April UTA, was the first chance for some Airmen to break in new chemical suits. After spending much of the day under simulated chemical attacks, the

usual thick coat of charcoal from new suits left some with the military equivalent of SPF 1000.

Palpallatoc didn't seem to mind the dirt and the sweat. She was deployed to Iraq last year. She knew how important the training was. The heat of Patriot Force was similar to what she remembered, Palpallatoc said. Baking under the sun blanketed in chem gear gave those who will deploy to a hot climate a taste of what's to come.

That's why the 624th continues with Patriot Force, even when real-world operations tempo might make it more logistically difficult, said Lt. Col. Deric Wong, 624th deputy

*See Patriot, page 4*

## Deputy Commander's Comments

## Wingmen keep us safe

By Lt. Col. Deric Wong  
624th Regional Support Group  
Deputy Commander

Much is happening this month and it's been difficult deciding just what I should focus on for this month's commentary. By the end of May, the group's AEF 5/6 deployers will be returning and another batch of RSG members will be heading out on AEF 7/8, including me. May is also Asian Pacific American (APA) Heritage Month and National Military Appreciation Month. This month's article on Capt. Kathy Izon is but one of the 700+ stories this group has to tell. For many, May is a time for graduating from high school or college and the start of a new phase in life, particularly for Chief Master Sergeant Wilson Resurreccion who will be retiring, and Lt Col Richard Parkinson who'll be assuming command of the 624 CES from Lt Col Rey Tagorda.

Many changes are upon us, including a change of season. From a safety perspective, Memorial Day begins the official start of summer and the 100 days when recreation-related mishaps rise. It's particularly important to me that we all celebrate Labor Day injury-free.

**Unrivaled Wingman.** The 15 AW recently lost a member in a fatal car crash. Alcohol and speed, as well as fatigue, were a factor. Although the

individual was alone when he lost control of his speeding car, it was only after partying with friends at their home then closing a bar after nearly 24-hours with little, if any, sleep. Interviews of the member's co-workers and friends suggest there were numerous occasions when a Wingman could have broken the chain of events leading to the member's death.

Each of you reading these words are connected to each other in some way; by culture, because of our military affiliation, because of our civilian job, because we choose to be. As military members, many things we do are inherently dangerous and we often do them in dangerous places. Wingmen help us minimize these dangers and help each other return to our families alive.

No one formally tags you a Wingman for someone else. Our connection to each other and the situation implies it. We may be working the same shift on the cargo ramp or on some construction project at the far end of the base or loading litter patients onto a C-130 with its engines running. Whatever the situation might be, whoever we might be accomplishing the task with, our Wingman is the person working beside us.

Be a good Wingman and look out for each other. I hope everyone has a happy, healthy summer.

## Action Line

The Action Line is your direct line to the 624th Regional Support Group Commander, Col. Pamela Milligan.

If you have worked through normal channels and are not satisfied with the answer, the Action Line is your opportunity to ask questions or make suggestions about the subjects of concern to the 624th RSG community.

You may contact us via E-mail at:  
**rsgactionline@hickam.af.mil.**

Please include your name and phone number in case more specific information is required.

Action Lines of general interest will be published in *Pacific Crossings*; others will be answered by phone.

Remember, the quickest and most efficient way to solve a problem is to talk directly to the office that is responsible. This gives them a chance to help you and perhaps improve the process.

Contact us at  
**rsgactionline@hickam.af.mil**



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To submit an article or story idea, call (808) 448-0919 or send e-mail to daniel.nathaniel@hickam.af.mil or jennifer.chamberlin@hickam.af.mil

Submission deadline is the Friday two weeks prior to the next UTA. The newsletter reserves the right to edit all submissions to journalistic standards. Acceptance of inputs by the public affairs staff does not guarantee publication.

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## Annual tour dates needed for year

The countdown checklist for the close out of fiscal year 2007 budget year has begun. In preparation for the end on Sept. 30, the 624th RSG has already started to realign funds to be sure expenditure rates are where they should be. The first official checklist item involves the obligation of annual tour funds.

The May UTA is the last opportunity for Airmen to coordinate annual tour dates with supervisors/units. Order specialists must have all orders published no later than May 30 and should ensure order worksheets are completed and turned in as soon as possible.

## Clothing allowance available

Air Force Reserve officers who serve on active duty for more than 90 days may be entitled to a clothing allowance of \$200 once every two years.

To receive the allowance, officers must fill out an Air

Force Form 1969. Members must have completed the required duty before the payment can be processed, and the next two year period begins the day after they are released from active duty orders. For more information, call 448-3634.

## Honor Guard needs members

The 624th RSG is seeking several good men and women to fill much needed positions within their Honor Guard.

Members who are interested in volunteering must be in compliance with AFI 36-2903, Dress and Appearance of Air Force Personnel, and AFI 10-248, Fitness Program. Honor Guard members are often in the spotlight, and must be ambassadors for the 624th RSG.

Above and beyond the feeling of pride and accomplishment that comes along with being a member in the Honor Guard, there are a few perks that all members receive as well.

All uniforms are provided to Airmen in the Honor Guard. Members also receive reserved parking at the Base Exchange and commissary and special write-ups for performance reports and award nominations.

If you are interested in volunteering for the Honor Guard, call Tech. Sgt. Emily Aguilar at 448-3566.

## Hickam Team takes Aloha Classic



Tech Sgt. Emily Aguilar, 624th Regional Support Group, maneuvers past an opponent during the Aloha Classic championship basketball game which took place Saturday, April 14 at the fitness center at Hickam Air Force Base. The Hickam Lady flyers beat the Elmendorf Air Force Base women's team with a final score of 79-68.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap



Firemen from the 624th Civil Engineering Squadron carry a “airplane crash survivor” to safety. The firemen were responding to a simulated C-17 crash during the Patriot Force exercise during the Hickam April UTA. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

## *Cont. from Patriot, page 1*

commander and chief of the Patriot Force evaluation team.

“You don’t want the first time you don your equipment to be the real thing,” Colonel Wong said. “This is very important training.”

Master Sgt. Dennis Pesch, 48th Aerial Port Squadron, said April’s exercise was the best of the four Patriot Forces he has participated in.

He was especially impressed with Group members’ cooperation and use of the buddy system.

“This training is going to save their lives so they take it really seriously,” Pesch said. “Their reaction to situations was professional and accurate.”

From the perspective of the evaluation team, Colonel Wong said he liked the overall performance of this year’s Patriot Force participants. The Group’s medical personnel, he also pointed out, successfully completed emergency procedures that are not technically part of their squadron’s mission. “They got out of their comfort zone and took care of business,” Colonel Wong said.

Tech. Sgt. Wayne Harper works in medical logistics for the 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron.

“This year seems to be going a lot better,” he said midway through the exercise.

Harper secured 36 litters and a NATO gurney through Hickam Air Force Base’s excess property

warehouse in the week leading up to Patriot Force.

“Just getting ready for this was my exercise,” he said. The NATO gurney Sergeant Harper secured was put to quick use. He said ASTS’ Tech. Sgt. Edwards, who recently returned from Iraq, showed other squadron members some of the tricks to using the gurney she learned in the deployed environment. “Little things like that” and other knowledge being passed on from those who had already deployed made everyone “more confident” in what they were doing, Sergeant Harper said.

There are over 65 members of the 624th RSG currently deployed in support of the global war on terror. About 15 more are scheduled to deploy this next cycle.



An unexploded ordnance is discovered near the 48th Aerial Port Squadron tent at the exercise. Members were evacuated to a field as one member works to identify the ordnance. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

# Air Force tells units to start anthrax program

By Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle  
*Air Force Print News*

WASHINGTON (AFNEWS)—Anthrax Vaccine Immunization Program, or AVIP, mandates Airmen assigned to high-threat areas receive the anthrax vaccine, while also providing Airmen the choice to continue anthrax vaccines if they are not assigned to a designated high-threat area.

The Department of Defense issued a new policy memo Oct. 12 requiring the DOD begin mandatory anthrax vaccinations for individuals in selected high-threat areas or special mission units.

Headquarters Air Force sent out an implementation message Feb. 16 to major commands, directing them to implement the AVIP, in accordance with current DOD and Air Force guidance, said Lt. Col. Todd Shull, Air Force Counter-Biological Warfare Division chief.

This implementation is in the initial stages and the Air Force has established a four-week time frame, upon unit notification, for units to begin giving the Anthrax vaccine to Airmen meeting the mandatory guidelines, he said.

The mandatory anthrax vaccinations are limited to Airmen who have orders to or are (currently) in specific high-threat areas - primarily the CENTCOM AOR or Korean Peninsula, Colonel Shull said.

In order to be subject to the mandatory anthrax vaccination you must remain in (these areas) for 15 or more consecutive days, the colonel said.

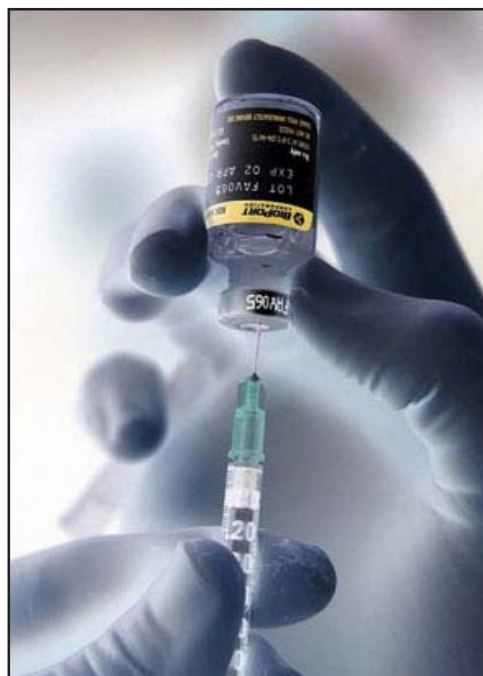
The DOD determined that these forward areas pose the highest threat for military forces so they must meet the mandatory anthrax vaccine measures. Additionally, personnel in designated special mission units, regardless of location, are also subject to mandatory Anthrax vaccination.

"The second key piece of the program is the voluntary aspect of the AVIP," Colonel Shull said. "This involves Airmen who have received at least one anthrax vaccine dose since 1998. Under the new guidelines, they can elect to continue getting the anthrax vaccinations in accordance

with the dosing schedule whether or not they are (or will be) assigned to a designated high-threat area."

Taking the vaccine voluntarily is consistent with good medical practice and personal protection, Colonel Shull said.

"While we've identified two areas as the most likely locations for an anthrax threat, we saw in 2001 that anthrax attacks could occur anywhere," he said. "Vaccination offers a layer of protection, in addition to antibiotics and other measures, that is critical for members of the armed forces."



The anthrax vaccine was first licensed in the United States in 1970. Since then, it has been given to those who could get exposed to environmental sources of anthrax such as service members, veterinarians, farmers and wool workers, Colonel Shull said.

In December 2005, anthrax vaccine was found to be safe and effective against all forms of anthrax, including inhalation anthrax. Over the course of the last 37 years the safety and effectiveness of the anthrax vaccine has been demonstrated. The anthrax vaccine is just as safe as other vaccines we're normally given over the course of our lives, he said.

Installation commanders ensure compliance with the AVIP by maintaining oversight and ownership of

the installation's AVIP implementation program.

"Ultimately, it comes down to the installation commanders to make sure this program works," Colonel Shull said. "They will be responsible to ensure Airmen receive mandatory vaccines when required and voluntarily continue the dosing schedule if they so desire."

Over the course of implementing this program, the Air Force will provide information and make additional information sources available to all Airmen about anthrax and the AVIP.

"The 512th Airlift Wing is currently conducting anthrax and AVIP training at various unit levels," said Lt. Col. Gary Noble, the 512th Aerospace Medicine Squadron administrator. "Once that training is complete, we anticipate resuming the shot series around mid to late April."



# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## Martin Mendoza

Technical Sergeant,  
44th Aerial Support Squadron



**Civilian Job:** Retired Police Officer

**What do you do for fun?** Collect Sports Memorabilia

**What is your favorite color?** Blue. I just think it's the color that shows strength and wisdom.

**What is your favorite food?** Anything that's edible...short ribs.

**Where do you see yourself in five years...ten years?** Being a grandfather.

**What is your favorite movie?** Any inspirational movie, Rudy. Never give up on your dreams.

**Why did the Chicken cross the road?** To check out the hens and run from the barbecue.

**What famous celebrities have you met?** Sports athletes Steve Young and Joe Montana.



## By Master Sgt. Leony Macapagal

624th Civil Engineering Squadron  
First Sergeant

Did you know that lightweight blue jackets are no longer considered outer wear? They may be worn indoors or outdoors and must be zipped at least halfway or not zipped at all. For more information, check Air Force Instruction 36-2903 - Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennie Chamberlin

Chief Master Sgt. Troy McIntosh, Command Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Reserve Command, visits with members of the 624th Regional Support Group and other Hawaii-based reservists May 1. Chief McIntosh spoke during a luncheon at Pearl Harbor Naval Base about matters affecting Reserve life, including uniform changes and retirement issues.

## UPCOMING DRILL WEEKENDS

### HICKAM UTA DATES

Jun 2-3

Jul 7-8

Aug 4-5

Sep 8-9

### ANDERSEN UTA DATES

Jun 16-17

Jul 21-22

Aug 18-19

Sep 22-23

# Airman celebrates, shares history



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap

**Capt. Kathy Izon is the exhibits director at Bishop Museum in Honolulu, Hawaii. Izon's grandparents migrated to Hawaii from the Philippines and her museum is the premier natural and cultural history institution in the Pacific. Behind her is "Knui\_kea," a painting by a Hawaiian artist that portrays the journey into the afterlife.**

**By Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap**  
624th Regional Support Group  
Public Affairs

Kathy Izon doesn't have just one mo'olelo. She has many mo'olelos. They are inside her head. They surround her. Every day. All day long.

"They (all) have a mo'olelo," Izon said, sitting among the exhibits she was referring to and using a Hawaiian term for the stories behind them. Together, their stories tell one story; a collective mo'olelo. An Asian-Pacific mo'olelo.

Izon is the exhibits director for Bishop Museum, a 13-acre facility nestled into the volcanic-formed mountains overlooking Honolulu, Hawaii. The museum's (and Izon's) mission: "To record, preserve and tell the story of Hawaii and the Pacific." Since its founding in 1889, the museum has acquired more than 23 million cultural items. That's a lot of mo'olelos. Even

with 13 acres, only a small fraction of the items are displayed at once.

But there is one exhibit that has been on display all six years Izon has worked at the museum. It's been an evolving exhibit. The story behind it has grown. It is a Filipino story. It is a Hawaiian story. It is an American story. It is even part of the Air Force story.

Just over a century ago, the first migrants from the Philippines arrived to work in Hawaii's vast plantations. "What's your name?" one worker was asked. His last name was Ayson. But he said it with a heavy accent. It sounded more like "Izon" and his name was changed for good.

In 1947, the worker's son was a soldier in the United States Army. The National Security Act was passed and the Army Air Corps was created. The soldier transferred and became one of the first Airmen to serve in what became the United

States Air Force. He retired while serving in his home state of Hawaii and eventually his daughter, Kathy, enlisted in the Air Force too.

Now, 20 years and a deserving-Airman commission later, Capt. Kathy Izon is the officer in charge of readiness for the 624th Regional Support Group's Aerial Port Squadron at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. "I always admired my father," Izon said, giving much of the credit for her joining the Air Force to him. Although he was often gone on temporary duty, she still stayed close to him.

Izon grew up an Air Force brat, but claims Hawaii as her home. "I've spent most of my life here," she said. And like most the islands' residents today, her roots lie elsewhere, across the Pacific (her father's father was actually Chinese-Filipino).

That is why she and many other Hawaiians are now so short, Izon playfully claimed. "The original Hawaiians were huge," she said, pointing to an early European explorer's drawing of a giant Hawaiian native standing on a beach.

Izon's small stature does little to contain her enthusiasm for Pacific cultures, even when they are not technically her own. She speaks as though they were.

A permanent fixture at her museum is the Kahili Room, where Hawaii's past royals are honored and their precious kahili, or feather standards, are displayed. "The more yellow, the more important you were," she said, proudly referring to the feathers. Also in the room is a tribute to Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, the last surviving member

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*Cont. from History, page 7*

of the Kamehameha Dynasty that ruled over Hawaii since 1810.

Princess Bernice's love was forbidden by her family, Izon said, but she married Charles Reed Bishop, an American from New York, despite their objections. The marriage was a very happy one and was eventually accepted. "He took such good care of her," Izon said with a sort of awe of Charles and the deep love he shared with his wife. The princess died in 1884 and Charles founded the Bishop Museum five years later in memorial to his beloved wife.

It was soon after the museum's love-story birth that Izon's grandfather and other Filipinos went to work in Hawaii's plantations. The exhibit, "Sentenaryo: 100 Years of Filipinos in Hawaii and Beyond," opened last year. Part of the exhibit featured large blow-ups of photos donated by the owners of a local shop that closed after developing Hawaiians' photos for decades. Identities of those in the photos were largely unknown, at first.

"Wow, that's a really big picture," Izon quoted a woman visiting the exhibit for the first time before realizing there was something familiar about it. "Wait, that's Dad..."

The woman was one of many surprised to find not just their heritage, but their family, on display at the museum.

"I got to meet them and hear their stories," Izon said. "One family knew my parents."

Izon likes her job. She likes people. She likes to "learn something new everyday." She likes books. Sifting through the museum's mountain of archives is fun. "I always liked to read," she said.



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Jason Schaap



**Above:** Next to Izon is a royal Hawaiian cloak currently under restoration at her museum. The millions (if not more) of feathers woven into the cloak by hand probably took several generations to complete.

**Left:** The rare yellow feathers were a sign of royalty and came from trapped O'O birds. Each bird had only a few of the feathers, and they were so valuable they were used to pay taxes.

The second youngest of eight children, Izon's family knows how much she loves the past. They call her "the family historian."

"For Christmas, they don't get presents. They get their genealogies," she said with a big laugh.

When her father was reluctant to be interviewed, she hid a tape recorder behind a napkin holder. Then she acquired his military record from the Veteran's Administration. She transcribed his interview, put his medals in a shadow box and presented him with all of it. He laughed and smiled, she said, because that is how her father says, "I'm happy, thank you." She didn't say, "You're welcome." She just smiled instead. Last year, it was Izon's siblings turn. She interviewed

them. She learned about them. Her oldest brother told her what it was like on the plantation where their parents lived after their father joined the military. And she learned one of her siblings really doesn't like eggplant. Two others, she discovered, had something in common.

"I didn't know you liked root beer too," she remembered one sibling saying to another while the family hung out last Christmas day and read the stories their young prepared for them.

It made her happy to watch them share their stories with each other, Izon said. It made her smile. Because eggplant and root beer are not just parts of their stories; they are part of the Izon story. The Izon mo'olelo. And one day, she said, the next generation of Izens will know that story too.